in 20 districts of Orissa are reported to have sustained crop loss of 50% and above. In the remaining 8 districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Gujapati, Ganjam, Khurda, Puri, Sambalpur and Sundargarh, 8306 villages have sustained crop loss of 50% and above, on the basis of eye estimation. As per eye appraisal 21 Talukas in 8 districts in Madhya Pradesh and 1650 villages in 7 districts in Maharashtra are facing drought conditions.

(c) and (d) Memoranda have been received from the States of Gujarat and Orissa seeking additional Central financial assistance of Rs. 50.00 crores and Rs. 585.80 crores respectively for drought relief measures. A Central Team has visited Orissa on 17-20 November, 1996 to assess the drought situation and make recommendations for consideration of the National calamity Relief Committee about the quantum of additional assistance. The request of the Government of Gujarat is under consideration.

Permission for construction of a bus depot at Penukonda

1528. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:
DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh Government has requested for resuming the construction work of a Bus Depot at penukonda in Anantapur District as public is being inconvenienced for want of a Bus Depot facility; and

(b) if so, the action taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The proposed site for construction of the Bus Depot is very near the monument and falls within the prohibited limit of 100 metres. As per the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Rules, 1959, no construction is allowed within this prohibited zone. The State Government has been advised to identify some other site for the purpose.

Modernisation of Farm Sector

1529. SHRI O.P. KOHLI:
SHRI VAYALAR RAVI:

Will the minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the area under cultivation is declining whereas the requirement of agricultural products is gradually increasing;

(b) if so, whether Government has called for private investment in the farm sector to infuse advanced technology to improve agricultural productivity, build infrastructure, educate and train farmers to shed their age-old systems and adopt modern methods;

(c) whether there has been any response to their call and if so, the broad details thereof;

(d) the steps taken by Government themselves, with the indigenously available resources, to modernise the farm sector; and

(e) if no such steps have been taken, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) The net sown area has been stagnant at about 142 million hectares during the years 1989-90 to 1993-94 (latest available). The requirement of agricultural products is increasing on account of increase in populaton as well as income.

(b) to (e) There are no restrictions on private sector investment in the farm sector. in fact, the Government is encouraging private investment in the farm sector by providing the support of infrastructure, credit, research, training and education and by creating a favourable price and trade regime. Various Plan schemes are implemented for increasing production and productivity of crops. Accordingly, the private sector gross capital formation in agriculture (at 1980-81 prices) which was Rs. 2840 crore in 1980-81 increased to Rs. 3441 crore in 1990-91 and to Rs. 4762 crore in 1994-95.